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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAMA 000235

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ETTC](#) [EFIN](#) [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [BEXP](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: CTAG COUNTRY AMBASSADORS SEE NO IMMEDIATE NEEDS IN  
BAHRAIN, BUT SOME CONCERN ABOUT APRIL 2004 FORMULA ONE RACE

REF: A. STATE 14279

[1](#)B. MANAMA 2790

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Robert S. Ford. Reason 1.4 (D).

[1](#)1. (U) CTAG Ambassadors in Bahrain agreed U.S. Embassy-led efforts are meeting key Bahraini needs, but they wondered if the April 2004 Formula One race event's security would be adequate. Over lunch at DCR February 17 with the Ambassadors from Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and the Japanese Charge, the CDA summarized USG efforts in counterterrorism:

-- Continued U.S. assistance to the Bahrainis in the area of detecting explosives. At DS/ATA expense, a Bahraini team from the Ministry of Interior and the Bahrain National Security Agency are standing up explosive detecting K-9 teams for training in the U.S. In addition we have reviewed with the Bahrainis extensively how to set up large vehicle scanners to detect vehicles loaded with explosives as well as large crates loaded with explosives. These scanners could be set up at the causeway coming from Saudi Arabia, at the airport, or seaport.

-- Training the Bahrainis to manage crises. Last autumn the USG funded training for a diverse by a group of Bahraini first responders, and there is now a critical incident management training team in country working with Bahraini Ministry of Interior and other GOB officials. In addition, we anticipate an S/CT exercise involving senior policy makers in April, 2004.

[1](#)2. (U) The CDA also noted that the embassy hopes that an attache from the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) will arrive in country during the next six months. The British Ambassador noted news reports that the financial action task force (FATF) is considering establishing a regional office in Manama. The FATF regional office could provide synergy for work by the OFAC attache in Bahrain and in the region. CDA said that the Bahrainis had raised the location of the FATF office with U.S. Treasury Department officials, but no U.S. Government had not announced which potential site it would support.

[1](#)3. (C) British Ambassador said that HMG was working with Bahraini military but this did not directly involve counterterrorism. He said that there is also a British expert team training Bahraini police in BIP and close protection.

[1](#)4. (C) The French, Russian and German Ambassadors said that Bahrain had made no requests from them for assistance in the field of counterterrorism and they therefore have no programs ongoing in Bahrain. The Japanese Charge said that Tokyo's focus is on building up capabilities among south east Asian countries, rather than countries in the Persian Gulf.

[1](#)5. (C) The Charge and British Ambassador emphasized that Bahrain still needs a law against conspiracy, so that the government can arrest those conspiring to conduct criminal acts. The British Ambassador noted that he had sent many letters to different government officials on this issue. UK poloff said their sources in the Ministry of Interior reported that the Bahraini Government has received copies of the United Arab Emirates anti-conspiracy law, in addition to copies of the American and British laws. None of our diplomatic colleagues knew if there is, in fact, a Bahraini draft conspiracy law in circulation within the Bahraini government. Several of the diplomats agreed getting Parliament to pass such a law quickly would be problematic.

[1](#)6. (C) All agreed another joint CTAG push with the Bahraini MFA to secure Bahraini Ratification of all UN anti-terror resolutions would be useful. CDA said the U.S. embassy, as CTAG chair in Bahrain, would take the lead.

[1](#)7. (C) Several of the diplomats expressed concern about security in the build up to the early April 2004 Formula One race in Bahrain. CDA stressed that the embassy has received no intelligence pointing to such a threat, but that it is still early. None of the other diplomats report having received intelligence, but several expressed vague concerns about potential security lapses. The likelihood that Bahrain will receive upwards of 100,000 visitors during the first several days of April add to the concerns. They anticipate there will be a large surge in traffic coming over the

causeway from Saudi Arabia, but the scanners which the government is slowly moving to buy might not yet be in place.

FORD